



SOCIAL SERVICES

**Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration
PLANNING, HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
Housing**

TO: Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Community Services Committee

DATE: April 24, 2007 **FILE CODE:**

**SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS TO HOUSING STABILITY STRATEGY: PHASE I
COMPLETION & PHASE II PLANS**

RECOMMENDATION:

For information.

SUMMARY:

The Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy, when completed in the fall of 2007, will serve as the Region's system plan to address homelessness and as a companion document to the Region's Community Action Plan for Housing. It is well known that the housing stability system is a critical factor in protecting and enhancing the community's health and well-being. This project seeks to maintain and enhance the system's capacity to address homelessness through the development of a prioritized action plan for the future. Phase I of this project has been completed and Phase II is underway. Information regarding sponsors, who has been involved, and deliverables for each phase are summarized.

REPORT:

Background

Since 2005, Regional staff has been conducting a needs assessment of the housing stability system (otherwise known as the Sheltering Needs Assessment, see reports SS-06-008 and SS-06-048). The housing stability system includes services that meet immediate needs (e.g., emergency shelters, street outreach), shorter term housing stability programs (e.g., transitional programs, transitional housing), and longer term housing stability programs (e.g., housing with supportive services). Given that the project spans two years, it was divided into two phases (as described further in this report).

The ultimate goal of this project is to produce a prioritized action plan for the future. This action plan will outline evidence-based strategies to strengthen the housing stability system that serves people who are experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and/or who require access to longer term housing stability services in Waterloo Region. The expected long-term outcome of this project is an advancement of the community's efforts to end housing instability in Waterloo Region.

The target audience for the deliverables of this project includes housing stability service providers, the Regional Municipality of Waterloo (the Region), and the Homelessness and Housing Umbrella Group (the HHUG) with its member groups.

This project is both significant and timely for a number of reasons. It provides support for other Regional planning initiatives, assists staff to prioritize resources, provides a review of cost effective

solutions to homelessness, provides a comprehensive housing stability system resource, identifies methods to continue tracking trends, and profiles the importance of housing stability in Waterloo Region. Findings from this research suggest that the housing stability system is a critical factor in protecting and enhancing the community's health and well-being. Homelessness is a very costly social issue and has been linked to several very negative outcomes, including higher risk of mortality.

Phase I Completion

Phase I of the project began in 2005 and ended in February 2007. Sponsorship, guiding committee membership and deliverables within this period are outlined below:

Phase I Sponsorship:

In Phase I of the project, the sponsor was Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration (SPPPA), as the service system manager for homelessness.

Phase I Guiding Committees:

There were two main committees that helped to guide the first phase of the project, an Internal Team (including seven Regional staff from Social Services, Housing, Planning and Community Services, and Public Health) and a Community Editorial Group (comprised of ten community members or service providers from across the region). Internal Team and Community Editorial Group members participated in a variety of tasks associated with the first phase of the project. Please see Appendix A for a list of the participants in Phase I.

Phase I Deliverables:

The primary outputs of Phase I were the completion of six background reports, including:

- 1) *Qualitative Data Report for Waterloo Region Sheltering Needs Assessment* (research with persons with lived homelessness experience and service providers)
- 2) *Understanding Homelessness Experienced by Youth in Waterloo Region: A Discussion Document*
- 3) *Understanding Homelessness and Housing Stability Experienced by Adults in Waterloo Region's Urban Areas*
- 4) *Understanding Homelessness and Housing Stability Experienced by Older Adults in Waterloo Region*
- 5) *Understanding Homelessness and Housing Stability in Waterloo Region's Rural Areas*
- 6) *Assessing Economic-based Homelessness: A Report for the Housing Stability System*

The following activities also took place over this time period:

- Several community-wide consultations were held (June 13, 2005; October 26, 2005; May 4 and 5, 2006; November 24, 2006).
- Several key informant meetings were held and presentations were made to organizations/groups that work to address issues of housing and homelessness.
- Draft community definitions were created for homelessness, housing stability, and the homelessness/housing stability system resource model.
- The *Inventory of Services for the Housing Stability System in Waterloo Region* document was completed that profiles over 70 programs in Waterloo Region.

The full background reports as well as executive summaries will be posted on the Region's website by mid-May, 2007. A copy of the executive summaries will also be available in the Councillor's library and with Council and Administrative Services.

Phase II Plans

Phase II began on March 1, 2007 with the first meeting of the steering committee. This phase will conclude with a community launch in the fall of 2007. Sponsorship, guiding committee membership and deliverables within this period are outlined below:

Phase II Sponsorship:

Phase II will be co-sponsored by Social Services' Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration and the Housing division of Housing, Planning and Community Services.

Phase II Guiding Committee:

The second phase of the project will be guided by one steering committee. Membership includes Regional staff (from Social Services, Housing, Planning and Community Services, and Public Health) and service providers and/or HHUG representatives from across the region. There are six main tasks for this group: finalize the charter and timeline; synthesize the insights from the six background reports completed in Phase I; assist with a community forum to be held in the spring of 2007; edit the final document; assist with developing the communication plan; and assist with the community launch. In addition, the opportunity to participate on an ad-hoc working group to address persistent homelessness was made available to all attendees at the November 2006 community-wide consultation. Please see Appendix B for a list of the participants in Phase II.

Phase II Deliverables:

Phase II will culminate with a document entitled, *All Roads Lead to Home: A Homelessness to Housing Stability Strategy for Waterloo Region*. This document will synthesize all current information and include an action plan.

In order to complete this document, an *Insights to Action Workbook* will be circulated to all stakeholders for input in May/June and a community forum will be held at the end of June. The forum will aim to confirm a vision statement and principles for working with people experiencing homelessness, confirm roles in the community, finalize community definitions of homelessness and housing stability, finalize the homelessness/housing stability system resource model, and confirm use of language within the system.

In September 2007, staff will bring forward the final report and recommendations to Regional Council regarding priority action items for the future, based on the findings of this project. A public launch of the document is planned for the fall of 2007.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Working to strengthen the housing stability system and build the community's capacity to address issues of homelessness is consistent with the Region's Corporate Strategic Plan, Focus Area 2 to enhance community health and social well-being.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Expenditures related to staff time for completing Phase II will be covered within existing approved budgets.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

Social Services and Housing, Planning and Community Services are co-sponsoring Phase II of this project. Staff members from Public Health are participating on the Phase II steering committee.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Phase I Participants
Appendix B: Phase II Participants

PREPARED BY: *Angela Pye, Social Planning Associate*
Marie Morrison, Manager, Social Planning
Irwin Peters, Manager, Waterloo Region Housing
Keith Lucas, Director, Housing
Lynn Randall, Director, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration

APPROVED BY: *Michael Schuster, Commissioner, Social Services*
Rob Horne, Commissioner of Housing, Planning and Community Services

**APPENDIX A
PHASE I PARTICIPANTS**

Phase I: Internal Team

Sharon Froehlich	Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration, Social Services
Marie Morrison	Manager, Social Planning, Social Services
Angela Pye	Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration, Social Services
Lynn Randall	Director, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration
Theresa Schumilas	Director, Health Determinants & Planning/Evaluation
Wilma Schultz	Manager Special Services, Employment/Income Support
Jeff Schumacher	Principal Planner, Housing

Phase I: Community Editorial Group

Barb Chrysler	Lutherwood, Safe Haven Shelter
Ron Flaming	House of Friendship
Cathy Middleton	Kitchener-Waterloo YWCA
Charles Nichols	Community Member
Heather Papp	Lutherwood, Housing Counselling
Frank Scarfino	Waterloo Interfaith Supportive Housing (WISH)
Debbie Schlichter	House of Friendship
Will Stoltz	Community Member
Anne Tinker	Cambridge Shelter Corporation
Eva Vlasov	Argus Residence for Young People

Phase I: External Researchers

Robert Case	Centre for Research and Education in Human Services
Ernie Ginsler	Ginsler & Associates Inc.
Tracy Perissini	University of Waterloo
Steve Pomeroy	Focus Consulting Inc.
Donald G. Reid	University of Guelph

Phase I: Community Editors

48 community editors volunteered to provide feedback on at least one of the five background reports.

The Region's Youth Homelessness Coordinating Group (20 active and 43 associate members) were involved with the youth report.

**APPENDIX B
PHASE II PARTICIPANTS**

Phase II: Steering Committee

Sandy Bell	ROOF
Kristine Dearlove	Rent Bank
Ron Flaming	House of Friendship
Sharon Froehlich	Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration, Social Services
Lee Henderson	CMHA
James Hagglund	Salvation Army/New Directions
James Hunsberger	Independent Living Centre
Alison Johnson	Lutherwood
Cathy Middleton	K-W YWCA
Marie Morrison	Manager, Social Planning, Social Services
Charles Nichols	Community Member
Irwin Peters	Manager, Waterloo Region Housing
Katherine Piggot	Planner, Public Health
Angela Pye	Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration, Social Services
Catherine Savage	K-W Out of the Cold
Wilma Schultz	Manager Special Services, Employment/Income Support
Jeff Schumacher	Principal Planner, Housing
Will Stoltz	HHUG, rural representative
Linda Terry	Social Planning Council of Cambridge and North Dumfries
Gretta Unger-Petters	Participation House
Van Vilaysinh	Social Planning Associate, Social Planning, Policy and Program Administration, Social Services
Eva Vlasov	Argus Residence for Young People
Kim Voelker	CCAC
Megan Whalen	CHMA outreach